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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how the traditional transfer role of the community college has become less significant as a vocational and community-based role has assumed importance. The paper describes factors contributing to the transfer function's decline and illustrates various attitudes surrounding the issue. The history of transfer education is reviewed, noting historical events that affected the educational system, such as the Great Depression, World War II, the G.I. Bill, and the 1947 Truman Commission. The effects of increased minority enrollment, the changing roles of faculty, and factors in the 1980's that sparked a renewed interest in the transfer function are discussed. The paper also outlines a nine-point agenda, created in 1991 by the American Council on Education and the National Center for Academic Achievement and Transfer. This agenda called upon two- and four-year colleges to do the following: (1) establish a firm commitment to transfer; (2) enrich the connection between teaching and learning; (3) revitalize academic relationships between institutions; (4) manage transfers more effectively; and (5) identify and realize transfer goals. The remaining points called upon governing boards, accreditation bodies, and government to inform students fully and acknowledge the importance of financial support. Interviews with educational leaders and faculty who support the transfer function are summarized. (Contains 21 references.) (AS)

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Running head: COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND THE TRANSFER FUNCTION

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Community Colleges and the Transfer Function

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The community college is a social system. Its internal functions and parts are effected by outside forces and the institution in turn effects its external environment. As a social system, the community college has altered its mission from one of primarily providing a university transfer program to one of providing a comprehensive range of offerings in response to changing societal demands. One of the major criticisms of the community college is that upon becoming comprehensive, the preparation of students for transfer is being neglected. In order to understand the present state of the transfer function, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the many factors that contributed to its decline. An examination of the arguments against a strong transfer emphasis as well as perspectives from practicing educators and researchers in the community college sector will also illustrate the various attitudes that surround this issue.

In the early 1900's, the liberal arts and transfer function dominated the junior college, the precursor to the community college. University presidents and educators who were central to the early establishment of the junior college were particularly motivated by their interest in providing advanced study without the distraction of lower-division work at their institutions. They believed the junior college would enhance access by making more education available locally and at a low cost, expand the scope of studies after high school, and, in general, reach an audience of potential students never before served by existing universities (Eaton, 1994b). The writings of the university presidents in these early years showed they were committed to terminal and occupational education in addition to transfer and preparatory education. However, regardless of their written commitment to occupational and terminal education, the transfer programs were dominant. A survey of student enrollments reflected transfer enrollments of 60 to 70 percent between 1907 and 1940 (Eaton, 1994a).

By the 1930's occupational education had expanded and received increased emphasis due to several factors. First, the Great Depression spurred many community colleges to offer vocational education less because of student's interests in higher education than because of the absence of jobs (Dougherty, 1994). World War II also modestly advanced the cause of the community college vocationalization. During the war, community colleges lost most of their male students to enlistment and the draft. In order to survive, many institutions contracted with the military to offer training courses. In addition, at the end of the war the initiation of the GI Bill had a significant impact on junior colleges. The G.I. Bill not only provided the financial means whereby enrollments could begin to grow dramatically but it also signaled a major change in public policy toward education. Higher education was now intended to be available to a much broader spectrum of citizens rather than being limited to the few. This in turn also contributed to the need for a more diversified curriculum since not all students were bound for the university.

Another element that significantly contributed to the rising interests in vocational education during the first half of the twentieth century was the 1947 Truman Commission. The Commission outlined several goals for higher education in its report entitled Higher Education for American Democracy which significantly impacted the community college. First, the Commission declared that education must be free and universal, in terms of interest, ability and need of the student. While the Commission indicated the centrality of the transfer function and general education, it's report noted an increased need for the diversification of the curriculum beyond transfer courses. Second, the Commission stated that education should provide students with skills for the workplace. This further supported the emphasis placed on vocational education and training. Finally, they determined education should be adjusted to meet the needs

of society. The emphasis on society indicated a the need for community based education. As a result of this report, the comprehensive community college mission, which placed new emphasis on vocational and community-based education, was adopted.

In addition to providing a conceptual foundation for the comprehensive community college, the Commission also changed the name of the junior college to community college to support its new emphasis. Even though the Commission stated that vocational education should be acquired in an environment that cultivates general education, the literature states that this shift in name was a powerful signal confirming that the traditional transfer role of the community college was becoming less important and that a vocational and community-based role was to receive significant emphasis in the future (Eaton, 1994a).

The literature shows that the role of the community college changed substantially between 1900 to 1950 as external forces stimulated national and local leaders to begin thinking in terms of educating the masses, community service and needs, open access, and vocational/technical education (Baker, 1994; Eaton, 1994a; Brint & Karabel, 1989). However, this was not the only significant period of influence. The social context of the 1960's through the 1980's acted as a trigger to induce community colleges to begin thinking in terms of lifelong learning, education for community and economic development, and institutional services. The changing role of the community college, which resulted from a multitude of environmental influences, has had a profound impact on the institution's emphasis on transfer education.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, the demands of the Truman Commission were becoming evident. Community colleges were being told by state officials that occupational education was central to their mission. Accordingly, community colleges were allocated more

funds from the state and federal governments for operating their vocational programs. More specifically, there were four major legislative acts that further strengthened the vocational role of the community college while diminishing the emphasis placed on the transfer function. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 were pivotal in the rapidly expanding enrollments of the community college. This legislation provided for a national program of grants and loans to students wishing to attend institutions of higher education. Between 1969 and 1979, federal support to community colleges went from 6 percent to 8.4 percent (Brint & Karabel, 1989). These acts provided a financial foundation for the establishment of the public policy commitment to equal opportunity.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 was a direct stimulant to the expansion of vocational programs in the community colleges. The act made federal dollars available to support vocational education schools, vocational work-study programs, and research, training and demonstrations in vocational education. The 1968 amendments to this act broadened the criteria for federal assistance to courses that did not lead to the baccalaureate. In 1984, the Vocational Education Act was supplanted by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, which provided aid to the handicapped, disadvantaged, single parents, homemakers and the incarcerated (Eaton, 1994b).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and especially the Executive Order dealing with affirmative action, combined with the changing demographics of the school-age population, resulted in a significant expansion of minority enrollments in community colleges. Minority enrollments at the community college grew from 759,800 (out of 3,879,100 total students) in 1976 to 1,106,900 (out of 4,868,100) in 1988 (Eaton, 1991). This increase exceeded the growth in minority

enrollment at four-year colleges and universities. Each of these legislative acts combined to produce, by 1970, a two-year college that differed significantly from the junior college of the early twentieth century that emphasized transferring to senior institutions. Yet, while massive federal, state and foundation funds have been expended on special projects to increase transfer effectiveness during the past two decades, transfer is still not highly emphasized at most community colleges.

The 1960's and 1970's emphasis on access and ensuring democratic education for everyone further encouraged the shift in orientation that was outlined by the Truman Commission--emphasis on the vocational and community-based role. Enrollments in the liberal arts, although remaining a constant in the community college, decreased and then remained stable. Eaton (1994a) noted that liberal arts study, which made up 75 percent of the curriculum in the earlier part of the century, had stabilized in 1970 at just over 50 percent. The transfer function also declined. Transfer education made up 60 to 70 percent of enrollments until the late 1960's. Since the 1970's, transfer estimates, to the extent that they are available, range from 20 to 30 percent. In addition, the cognitive complexity of liberal arts and transfer work diminished by asking students to do less demanding work (Cohen and Brawer, 1996; Eaton, 1994a). As a result of the increased emphasis on vocational-technical programs for job entry and upgrading, the scope and breadth of the liberal arts offerings at community colleges were reduced to the introductory level courses essential for a transfer program (Greenfield, 1994).

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, attention continued to be paid to the transfer function as part of the comprehensive community college conceptualized by the Truman

Commission, but much of the creative energy of community college educators was focused on the growing vocational and community-based functions. During this period, the transfer function underwent a shift in status. Although transfer had never been the exclusive function of the junior college, it was the dominant function within the two-year institution until the mid twentieth century. Transfer as the dominant function meant that emphasis was placed on traditional liberal arts curricula and that the relationships with senior institutions were important. With an increasingly dominant vocational function, liberal arts curricula gave way to vocational curricula and relationships with business and industry became increasingly important. More attention was paid to preparation for immediate employment than the development of basic intellectual skills needed for further collegiate work and earning the baccalaureate. By the 1980's, vocational enrollments had far exceeded the transfer enrollments (Brint & Karabel, 1989).

The 1980's brought with it a renewed interest in the transfer function. This renewed emphasis emerged as a corollary to three themes that were guiding the higher education discussion at the time (American Council on Education and the National Center for Academic Achievement and Transfer, 1991). The first theme was social justice. Institutions of higher education were seen as avenues of upward mobility especially for minority students. During this period, community colleges were enrolling 50 percent of all minority students in the United States and a large number of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The community college transfer function played a large role in educational opportunity which ultimately led to the social mobility of these groups. The second theme being discussed in higher education was the issue of accountability. There was great public concern about the return they would receive on their investment in higher education. This concern was reflected in the establishment of

government mandates for institutions to document student outcomes. The third concern was for the translation of access to education into actual student achievement. No longer was it enough for community colleges to simply open their doors to all who wanted to enter, access could only be justified if it led to genuine student achievement. This was a shift from the 1960's and 1970's notion of measuring access in terms of participation to a concern with the equality of opportunity measured by accomplishment (Richardson, 1994).

As a result of these concerns, the National Agenda for Academic Achievement and Transfer was established to provide a foundation for important institutional and academic policy decisions affecting the transfer experience and student achievement. The Agenda concentrated on the academic dimension of the transfer experience which paid attention to teaching and learning and approached transfer in terms of academic achievement rather than solely as articulation. In 1991, the American Council on Education and the National Center for Academic Achievement and Transfer designed a nine-point national agenda for action. The nine-point agenda called upon two- and four-year colleges to:

1. Establish a firm institutional commitment to transfer.
2. Enrich the connection between teaching and learning.
3. Revitalize academic relationships between institutions.
4. Manage transfer more effectively.
5. Identify and realize transfer goals.

It also called upon institutional governing boards, regional accreditation bodies, states and the nation to:

6. Inform students fully.
7. Issue a clear public call for improved transfer.
8. Acknowledge the importance of financial support.
9. Establish firm expectations of transfer success.

As a result, the community college mission was to be undertaken with a local, community-based context stressing three themes: access, responsiveness and comprehensiveness. This renewed emphasis on transfer challenged community college educators to reconsider, if not alter their priorities, the institution's mission and values.

In addition to the National Agenda, there were also several other individuals who contributed significantly to the call for strengthening the transfer function in the community college. The Ford Foundation funded two landmark transfer projects in the 1980's. First, the Urban Community College Transfer Opportunities Program (UCC/TOP) aspired to increase the number of minority students transferring to and succeeding at four-year institutions (Donovan, 1992; Knoell, 1994). The program developed practical strategies such as inter-session and summer session programs with four-year colleges, honors programs, and enhanced communication between two- and four-year faculty. Later, the Ford Foundation funded the National Center for Academic Achievement and Transfer to expand upon the successful models created during the UCC/TOP project. Grants were made for developmental, demonstration, evaluation and research activities in colleges and universities, to individual researchers, and to organizations that in turn award grants to entities that undertake pilot projects to improve transfer (Donovan, 1992).

Additional supporters of the transfer function are Cohen, Brawer, and Eaton. These university researchers are prominent advocates of the amplification of the collegiate function of the community college. The collegiate function centers on general education and college transfer preparation. An expanded collegiate identity calls for an institutional image in which intellectual activity is viewed as primary in relation to other activities such as training, service and support

(Cohen & Brawer, 1987; Eaton, 1994b). These researchers view the community college as emphasizing student learning and ultimately promoting individual growth and development. They urge community colleges to seek ways to strengthen students' academic integration such as encouraging greater faculty/student interaction outside of the classroom. In addition, they recommended that students' work lives should be integrated with their academic lives by providing more jobs on campus and academicizing outside work through paid internships. A community college is considered collegiate, meaning it is the dominant college function, when four conditions prevail (Eaton, 1994b, p. 1):

1. Structured sequential liberal arts and career education offerings dominate the curriculum, making up the majority of enrollments and offerings.
2. Primary attention is given to developing students' college-level competencies through these offerings.
3. The community college environment, through the values faculty and administrators share with students, tries to ensure that students will be both interested in and prepared for baccalaureate study, whether it is pursued immediately or sometime later.
4. The community college acknowledges its responsibility as a good citizen of the higher education community; it cooperates with other colleges and universities so that students, if they choose, will be able to transfer with ease.

Eaton (1994b), Cohen and Brawer (1987) maintain that this emphasis on providing transferable liberal arts and career education courses is not intended to be a calling for the reassertion of the primacy of the transfer function and the ascendancy of the liberal arts curriculum at the price of diminishing other programs and services.

These researchers argue that since the 1960's the vocational function has dominated the community college and as a result has changed the curricular emphasis of the community college. This change altered institutional expectations about the goals students would achieve, and it changed the relationships community colleges had with other organizations within the

community. In addition, with an increasingly dominant vocational function, liberal arts curricula gave way to vocational curricula. More attention was paid to preparation for immediate employment rather than the development of generic intellectual skills needed for further collegiate work and earning the baccalaureate (Eaton, 1994a). Cohen and Brawer (1987) maintain that, in the 1960's and twenty years thereafter, vocational enrollments grew at a faster rate than liberal arts enrollments and while this growth took place the liberal arts curriculum experienced an extreme narrowing.

Moreover, Eaton (1994a) believes that the shift in the importance of the transfer function over the past nine decades has not only diminished the scope of access in the community college but it has also weakened the perception of the community college as a collegiate institution within the family of higher education institutions. Furthermore, I agree with Eaton in that the shift in emphasis to vocational education has distanced the community college from senior institutions and further confirmed the public perception of the community college as academically substandard. An emphasis on vocational education has fed the perception that two- and four-year institutions are significantly different from one another. This distancing occurs because four-year institutions do not offer vocational programs nor do they typically accept vocational courses from community colleges. Therefore, many people assume, erroneously, that the community college is second class.

Furthermore, Eaton argues that the secondary status of the transfer function has reduced the extent to which the community college is an effective access institution. If the value of access is in part determined by how much education can be obtained, then the dominant status of the vocational function and the secondary status of the transfer function means access to less

education. With vocational education as the dominant function, access means opportunity for at most the two-year degree. Cohen and Brawer (1996) state that the transfer function is a powerful justification for access since it connects the community college with the larger world of higher education. Their position is that:

> The collegiate connection reveals the community college at its finest. These institutions were originally organized around their programs of collegiate studies...this function differentiates these colleges from proprietary trade schools, technical colleges, adult education centers, and corporate learning efforts...It is the rudder that keeps the colleges within the mainstream of graded education, stretching from kindergarten to graduate and professional schools. (p. xii)

Some community college critics who support the transfer function, such as Dougherty (1994) and Brint and Karabel (1989), believe that community colleges with a dominant vocational emphasis function to sustain social inequality. They believe that the combination of the vocational function as dominant and the transfer function as secondary perpetuates the social class structure in the United States. Similar to Eaton, they believe that access is more valuable when it is access to more education (i.e., the four-year degree). More education is economically and socially rewarded to a greater extent by society than less education. Therefore, if the transfer function were to become dominant in the community college, then the reproduction of the social class system would be hindered.

In short, a dominant collegiate function, according to the proponents, would change the community college's commitment to comprehensiveness by forcing the collegiate purpose to be valued over the other three purposes that are generally associated with comprehensiveness: occupational education, developmental and remedial education, and community service. The primary commitment of the institution would be college-level work which would ultimately

increase the emphasis placed on the transfer function. However, advocating the collegiate function is controversial because of its impact on comprehensiveness and its diminished commitment to pre-college work. There are several advocates of the community college who strongly oppose a dominant collegiate role. These arguments typically center around the fact that a strong collegiate function conflicts with the access mission of the community college.

Gleazer (1968) opposes the traditional notion of the collegiate function because he believes the community college's mission is to meet the needs that other educational institutions do not. More specifically, Gleazer argues for the community college to be a community-based learning center. He claims that exclusive emphasis on the transfer role would prevent the community college from addressing the broad range of students, with different abilities and interests, in the community. Gleazer points out that although two-thirds of community college students do not transfer, community college programs and procedures are chosen by administrators on the assumption that most students will.

In a similar vein, Parnell (1990) contends that since the majority of American people do not hold bachelor's degrees, collegiate education should not be the primary focus of the community college. The "ordinary" student, according to Parnell, is who the community college serves and these students are not the same as baccalaureate recipients. He believes further that rejecting the single standard of excellence that community colleges are commonly measured by, baccalaureate attainment, means rejecting the collegiate function. Although Parnell acknowledges the importance of both the comprehensive community college and the collegiate function, he also points out that baccalaureate attainment is overvalued in society and emphasis on this goal tends to push the community college in the direction of a single standard of

excellence.

A third argument against a dominant collegiate function is presented by Cross (1990). She argues that community colleges were created to "break the mold" of traditional higher education. The emphasis on the transfer function, according to Cross, would reduce educational opportunity and would not serve the majority of students well. More specifically, she believes that an emphasis on transfer betrays the commitment that was made when junior colleges became comprehensive community colleges. She maintains that the renewed focus on baccalaureate education might be made at the price of the community college's historic commitment to the educationally neglected. She questions whether the needs of all those who attend the community college can be met if public policy narrows the definition of success to the attainment of a bachelor's degree.

I agree with elements of each of these arguments. First, Gleazer makes a valid point in that community colleges must not focus so intently on those that transfer so that the policies and procedures for all students are based on the assumption that most students will transfer. However, I do believe that many community colleges have gone to the other end of the spectrum by over-emphasizing vocational/occupational education to the degree that it overshadows other elements of the institution. The comprehensive mission of the community college is here to stay and all elements of the institution need to be balanced with one another.

Parnell also makes a good point in that community colleges cannot be held to the same standard of measurement, baccalaureate attainment, as four-year institutions since they do serve many different types of students who many times have no intention of transferring to a senior institution. However, his argument falls apart when he makes the assumption that ordinary

students do not transfer. The data overwhelmingly shows that ordinary students do obtain bachelor's degrees (Eaton, 1994b). Therefore, the baccalaureate should not be confined to the elite as Parnell states.

I believe that Cross' arguments are quite valid. Community colleges need to be careful not to emphasize one program over another since they serve a vast array of students as well as work to meet the needs of the community. However, it is for this reason that I support the emphasis on the collegiate function. It would strengthen all programs by requiring all students to take general education courses in areas such as math, science, humanities, social sciences. The skills students would take from these courses would prepare them to be successful in the real-world and to change with the ever-changing marketplace regardless of the program they have chosen--transfer or vocational/occupational. In short, I believe that the justification for challenging comprehensiveness can be found in the major gains that students, society and the institution would reap. As institutions of higher education, community colleges should not be lured into emphasizing its non-college functions such as remedial education and vocational training. There needs to be a strong commitment to college-level work which the literature shows is not present.

In addition to reviewing the literature on the transfer function, I also conducted several interviews with educators at two Illinois community colleges. The colleges were chosen because the most recent data and characteristics report from the Illinois Community College Board (1996) shows that they have among the highest number of transfer students in the state: 15,740 for Harper and 10,609 for Moraine Valley. The following questions were asked in each interview:

1. Do you feel as if transfer education has been in a state of decline over the past twenty years? If so, what do you think contributed to this decline?
2. Could you tell me about the range of liberal arts offerings at your institution?
3. Please briefly describe your inter-institutional, regional or state articulation agreements.
4. Please describe any matriculation and guidance tools your institution uses to assist students such as assessment, remediation, etc.
5. Many critics argue that the dependence on part-time faculty reduces the quality of community college programs. Do you believe that the increasing reliance upon part-time faculty has had an impact on the quality of transfer education? Will it have an impact in the future?

The first interview was conducted with the Dean of Enrollment Services at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. The community that surrounds Harper College is comprised primarily of upper and middle class individuals who over the thirty years of the college's existence have primarily sought transfer education programs. Even the technical programs that are offered have become transfer paths as a result of community demands. The philosophy statement of the college states that the demands of the community are clear...there is a specific need for two-years of high-quality, transferable college credit. The Dean stated that he has seen some decline in the interest in transfer programs because more individuals who already hold baccalaureate degrees are now coming back to the community college for additional training in many areas. The community college, from his perspective, is being seen by many in the community as an extension of their baccalaureate degree program. The changing student demographics (i.e., increasing number of minority students, decreasing number of high school seniors and more returning adults) have also helped to shape the curricular offerings of the college. Since the interests of the community define the curriculum, Harper College has not experienced the same demand for vocational/occupational degree programs that many other community colleges have faced. Therefore, the range of courses offered in the liberal arts is

substantial. On the other hand, the college's entrepreneurial functions have grown substantially over the past twenty years but the Dean did not feel as if this growth has hindered the transfer function since the entrepreneurial college runs independently from the rest of the college.

Additional elements that support Harper College's strong transfer orientation are the many articulation agreements the institution has with four-year colleges and universities. They participate in the North Suburban Higher Education Consortium, the Illinois Articulation Initiative and a number of capstone programs. There are also a number of matriculation and guidance tools that are available at Harper which encourage students to transfer. Assessment is required for all new full-time students and students taking the first term of math and/or English. Mandatory advisement is not presently in place but is a goal the college is working toward so that students are taking the right courses to meet their academic goals. There is also a minority student outreach office that focuses particularly on assisting minority transfer students and a general advising office for all other students.

The second interview was conducted with the Dean of Business and Sciences at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills, Illinois. Similar to Harper, Moraine is also situated in a community that demands transfer education. However, it has not always been this way. The Dean pointed out that during the late 1950's there was legislation that emphasized a split between transfer and occupational programs. When that split took place, occupational education was strongly emphasized which at the time was what the community wanted at that time. As time passed, many people lost sight of the fact that the transfer and occupational functions share the same mission. They both prepare students for careers. He stated that the latest Department of Labor statistics show that people will change jobs nine times in their lifetime. This muddles the

distinction between transfer and occupational education because jobs require skills for both. The primary focus has to be on training people for careers. As a result, today Moraine Valley places equal emphasis on transfer and occupational education.

The Dean oversees both the transfer and occupational programs. Moraine has taken deliberate steps toward having students take general education courses regardless of the program in which they are enrolled. For instance, occupational students take English I rather than the special Business Writing course they took in the past. This prepares students to take any career path and transfer if they wish. Furthermore, the Dean feels that, at Moraine, the wall between the transfer and occupational faculty has disappeared. Twenty years ago the two were very adversarial and territorial. Now they work together and do not make those distinctions. It is just as important for a student to enroll in an occupational program as it is a transfer program. This supports Cohen and Brawer's (1996) assertion that to retain a difference between the two is to do a disservice to the student since students use the curricula in such a way that both kinds of courses are taken in many programs. He feels strongly that if the true mission of the institution is preparing people for careers then the college must make student's curricular pathways as productive as possible so they are not penalized for changing their minds.

In the last decade, Moraine's transfer enrollments have been stable. They see more of the cyclical shifts in some of the shorter term training programs which are dependent on the job market. The area where there has been a steady decline has been in the hard sciences such as biology, chemistry and physics. Fewer students are interested in these programs.

A national survey in the 1970's showed that students said their primary concern was learning and how much money they would make was secondary. Today more high school students are

concerned with how much money they can make rather than with learning.

In order to support its transfer and occupational programs, Moraine also offers a broad spectrum of liberal arts courses which are designed the reflect the general education requirements of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). The Dean mentioned that an important element of the IAI was not simply that it provides students with a list of courses that will transfer, but it also articulates exactly what will constitute the first two years of a baccalaureate program. The IAI has helped to control the curriculum and put a stop to meaningless courses that are offered based on the interests of a particular faculty member. At Moraine this has helped maintain a high level of course quality since they now question whether or not each new course will be accepted under the IAI. While the IAI is important, Moraine's inter-institutional agreements are going to persist and be just as important. The Dean feels that in the future, these inter-institutional agreements will actually become stronger because the curriculum is going to be more well structured and monitored.

In addition, Moraine also has many matriculation and guidance tools that assist students with transfer. For instance, assessment is mandatory in reading and writing for any student who wants to transfer after they have taken their eleventh credit hour. There is also a transfer center students can utilize to gather information about colleges and universities and the transfer process. The real benefit of the transfer center, according to the Dean, is to help students to get focused and link them with the transfer school early. Academic advising is also available for all students, and developmental courses in math, reading and writing are offered.

Another question that I asked in both interviews was whether or not these administrators agreed with the community college critics who state that the use of part-time faculty has

diminished the quality of transfer education. As I expected, both individuals adamantly refuted this criticism. There is a tremendous difference in tenure between two- and four-year faculty that the administrators explained. After achieving tenure at a four-year institution, which is typically seven years, a faculty member is very committed to the institution. The demands on a four-year faculty members are also quite different than the community college faculty member in that they are required to conduct research. On the other hand, tenure at the community college is awarded after two years similar to the secondary school system and faculty are not required to research. This short period of time, according to the administrators, does not necessarily make faculty committed to the institution and many times as long as an individual waits two years then he/she has a job for life.

These administrators argue that the community college could deliver a better product if they used more part time faculty. Part time teachers make better faculty because they are excited and committed to teaching. They want to be involved and bring their real-world experiences with them. What happens at the community college is an atrocity. Faculty are hired and within three years a tenure decision has to be made. There is no research involved; it is just biding of time. Actually after 18 months, the third year contract has to be offered which means that realistically faculty are notified that they will be tenured after a year and a half. Typically, faculty at four year faculty have to do research and have tremendous peer support which makes good faculty, community college faculty do not research and have little peer support. In short, the administrators feel that the critics are wrong and elitist. Part-time faculty are actually improving the quality of instruction because institutions are able to be selective. The use of part-time faculty provides an opportunity for community colleges to hire new and energetic faculty.

The final element of my field research included telephone interviews. I interviewed James Palmer from Illinois State University and Arthur Cohen from the University of California--Los Angeles. Each was selected because he has been a leading researcher in the community college/transfer education field. The purpose of these interviews was to find out their perspectives on the state of the transfer function today and in the future.

Palmer sees the transfer function as in a paradoxical situation. He believes the transfer function is well established and has been for a long time. Large proportions of students attend the community college for the first two years of their baccalaureate degree program. In addition, states are taking action to hone articulation. It is a paradoxical situation because community college leaders all but ignore the transfer function. It is not high on the agenda of American Association of Community Colleges or the Illinois Community College Board because of their focus on workforce development. Leaders talk about expanding workforce development roles rather than promoting transfer because there is a great deal of money being put into workforce development. Many community college leaders would argue that their primary function is to serve the community in many different ways. They believe, like Gleazer (1968) the community college should be a service-agency that responds to community needs. There are two fundamentally different philosophies presented by community college researchers like Eaton, Cohen, Brawer and Palmer and the community service mind set of leaders in the college. Leaders see the collegiate community college as being elitist and serving the needs of the few. The bottom line is that many people use the community college as collegiate institutions whether as new students or university students looking to fill curricular gaps. Despite the lack of attention given to the collegiate function, it does play a significant role in the community college. People will continue to use the

community college as a collegiate institution despite the pronouncements of the community college leaders. The cultural expectation that one will go to college will keep the collegiate function alive despite the attempt of leaders to emphasize other functions such as workforce development today or community service twenty-five years ago. Palmer predicts that when there is another recession the market for contracted education will shrink considerably. Therefore once the economy recedes funding will also diminish along with emphasis on workforce development. The transfer function may come to light more during this period or it may be something else. Despite what community college leaders do not say and what the critics do say, transfer education has been a constant within the community college.

The second researcher I interviewed was Cohen. Cohen holds similar beliefs that transfer education today has never been better. He states that there are many reasons for this. First, more people are going to college today and there is less capacity in the universities to accept more students so students go to community college. For instance, California's universities have not increased the size of their incoming freshmen classes in over 30 years but total number of students seeking admission is up by 1 million. States that built comprehensive community college systems anticipated this population surge and increase in demand for college. Secondly, the low cost of community college education has also been influential in bringing more students to college. In 1991, the liberal arts accounted for 57% percent of total community college enrollments nationwide. This was a five percent increase from 1986 when the liberal arts accounted for 52%. He states that transfer rates are the same in 1991 as they were in 1984 and even though the arguments on behalf of vocational education have been very strong, it is rare for a community college leader to stand up and talk about the strength of the liberal arts. Cohen

states that over the twenty years, the discussion of vocational/occupational programs has taken center stage because community college leaders feel they can derive state support more readily for this function (Cohen, 1994). Legislators, for example, are seeking tangible results whereas if community college leaders were to ask for more money to increase liberal arts programs, there is no hard data to support the effects of these programs. In addition, he points out that there has been a tremendous amount of growth outside of the transfer programs which has made the transfer function appear to have significantly declined. However, when examined over a period of time, the actual number of transfer students has remained relatively stable.

Furthermore, Cohen points out that the recent revitalization of the transfer function has been due in part to the changing demography of community college students. There are increasing numbers of students who are minority, under-prepared, and economically disadvantaged. Concurrent with these demographic changes are tightening admission standards and increasing tuition at four-year institutions both of which will force many capable students into the community college for their first two years of baccalaureate work. The increase in the number of 18 year-olds in the American population that began a couple of years ago will continue until 2003 will also effect higher transfer rates (Cohen, 1994). In addition, state regulations on general education, like the IAI, are also helping to maintain the transfer function. Cohen believes that the transfer function will not disappear as long as the baccalaureate degree has value.

There were several elements of the field research I found to be valuable. First, the interviews with the community college educators provided me with a perspective I did not find in the literature. For instance, the Dean at Harper College mentioned that they have a strong

transfer program because historically that is what the community has wanted. The literature did not clearly represent this as a factor when examining the different curricular emphases. Many times I found the literature to be too concerned with explaining who was at fault for the decline of the transfer function rather than making any honest assessments of individual institutions. The literature that I reviewed examined the community colleges in general which tended to lose sight of the fact that these institutions are a product of the community and in some communities transfer education is not as necessary as it is at other institutions. However, I do agree with Eaton, Moraine Valley's Dean, Cohen and Brawer's assessment that an emphasis on the collegiate function should be a part of all degree programs so that students are left with a number of opportunities.

The results of my field research are especially enlightening when compared with the literature on the transfer function. When I began to research this topic, I was under the impression that the transfer function was quickly disappearing as a community college function not only because of the rise of workforce development and vocational education but also because the literature stressed the decline of the transfer function. However, each individual interviewed clearly stated that the transfer function is alive and well in the community college. While this is extremely encouraging, it also made me question the accuracy of the literature. Much of the research regarding the transfer function was written in the 1980's when transfer education became a national concern. However, since that time, there has not been much discussion of the topic which leads one to believe that the transfer function has become less important. The field research has illustrated that this interpretation is incorrect. I think that Palmer's assessment was correct when he pointed out that transfer education is kept in the background not because it is

less important but because it is something that the community colleges, as members of higher education, are expected to be doing. Therefore, when reviewing the literature discussing the transfer function, one must keep in mind that it is relatively dated.

Furthermore, a scrutiny of the history of the educational role of the community college does not support the argument that the history can be accurately described as a transition from a preoccupation with the liberal arts and transfer purpose to a preoccupation with terminal vocational students. The situation is more complex, with history reflecting an on-going commitment to a multipurpose institution and shifting emphases among these purposes. Therefore, I believe community college leaders need to determine how the transfer function fits into their institutional mission. The comprehensive mission will not vanish. Leaders need to make careful evaluations of their communities' needs so that emphasis is not being placed on what they feel is important but on what the community needs and/or desires. I strongly agree with Cohen, Brawer and Eaton in that the community college should be a collegiate institution. If community colleges are to continue to be members of the higher education community then they must emphasis college-level work. Failure to do so, will not only turn community colleges into training institutions but it will also maintain the misperceptions that are present within the community and four-year institutions that community colleges do not provide the same quality of education as four-year colleges and universities.

In addition, leaders must also develop transfer and occupational/vocational programs that parallel one another in terms of general education requirements. Moraine Valley is working hard to eliminate the distinctions between their transfer and occupational/vocational programs so that no matter which a student chooses, any career path is open to them. I think that at too many

institutions there are great variances between the transfer and occupational/vocational programs which harm students who change their minds. Community colleges should stress as a core mission the goal of facilitating lifelong learning and career development instead of continuing to act as if transfer and occupational/vocational programs are distinct and apart from each other (Greenfield, 1988). Educators needs to recognize the new realities of community college students. These are rapid obsolescence of specific job knowledge and skills and the need for a larger share of the curriculum to be remodeled to accommodate integrated general education courses that are enticing and intellectually challenging. Needed above all are the educational leaders and faculty who are willing to take risks and invest the tremendous time and energy necessary to allow them to go beyond lip service to general education and to come closer to that ideal of excellence and equity in mass higher education.

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